



No 32





Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2014

Wm. Tuckerman.

1812.

THE

to

Mr. Q. C. Gay.

PLEASURES
OF
IMAGINATION.

A Poem

IN THREE BOOKS.

BY DR. AKENSIDE.

PORTLAND :
PRINTED BY THOMAS B. WAIT.

.....

1805.

Acc 2014-326

PR3312

.P5

1805x

THE DESIGN.

THERE are certain powers in human nature which seem to hold a middle place between the organs of bodily sense and the faculties of moral perception.....They have been called by a very general name, *The Powers of Imagination*. Like the external senses they relate to matter and motion ; and at the same time, give the mind ideas analogous to those of moral approbation and dislike. As they are the inlets of some of the most exquisite pleasures we are acquainted with, men of warm and sensible tempers have sought means to recall the delightful perceptions they afford, independent of the objects which originally produced them. This gave rise to the imitative or designing arts ; some of which, like painting and sculpture, directly copy the external appearances which were admired in nature ; others, like music and poetry, bring them back to remembrance by signs universally established and understood.

But these arts, as they grew more correct and deliberate, were naturally led to extend their imitation beyond the peculiar objects of the imaginative powers ; especially poetry, which making use of language as the instrument by which it imitates, is consequently become an unlimited representative of every species and mode of being. Yet as their primary intention was only to express the objects of imagination, and as they still abound chiefly in ideas of that class, they of course retain their original character, and all the different pleasures they excite, are termed, in general, *Pleasures of Imagination*.

The design of the following poem is to give a view of these, in the largest acceptation of the term ; *so that whatever our imagination feels from the agreeable appearances of nature, and all the various entertainment we meet with either in poetry, painting, music, or any of the elegant arts, might be deducible from one or other of those principles in the constitution of the human mind which are here established and explained.*

In executing this general plan, it was necessary first of all to distinguish the imagination from our other faculties ; and then to characterise those original forms or properties of being about which it is conversant, and which are by nature adapted to it, as light is to the eyes, or truth to the understanding. These properties Mr. Addison had reduced to the three general classes of *Greatness, Novelty, and Beauty* ; and into

these we may analyze every object, however complex, which, properly speaking, is delightful to the imagination. But such an object may also include many other sources of pleasure ; and its beauty, or novelty, or grandeur, will make a stronger impression by reason of this concurrence. Besides this, the imitative arts, especially poetry, owe much of their effect to a similar exhibition of properties quite foreign to the imagination ; insomuch that in every line of the most applauded poems, we meet with either ideas drawn from the external senses, or truths discovered to the understanding, or illustrations of contrivance and final causes, or, above all the rest, with circumstances proper to awaken and engage the passions. It was therefore necessary to enumerate and exemplify these different species of pleasure ; especially that from the passions, which, as it is supreme in the noblest works of human genius, so, being in some particulars not a little surprising, gave an opportunity to enliven the didactic turn of the poem, by introducing a piece of machinery to account for the appearance.

After these parts of the subject which hold chiefly of admiration, or naturally warm and interest the mind, a pleasure of a very different nature, that which arises from ridicule, came next to be considered. As this is the foundation of the comic manner in all the arts, and has been but very imperfectly treated by moral writers, it was thought proper to give it a particular illustration, and

to distinguish the general sources from which the ridicule of characters is derived. Here too a change of style became necessary; such a one as might yet be consistent, if possible, with the general taste of composition in the serious parts of the subject; nor is it an easy task to give any tolerable force to images of this kind, without running either into the gigantic expressions of the mock heroic, or the familiar and pointed raillery of professed satire; neither of which would have been proper here.

The materials of all imitation being thus laid open, nothing now remained but to illustrate some particular pleasures which arise either from the relations of different objects one to another, or from the nature of imitation itself. Of the first kind is that various and complicated resemblance existing between several parts of the material, and immaterial worlds, which is the foundation of metaphor and wit. As it seems in a great measure to depend on the early associations of our ideas, and as this habit of associating is the source of many pleasures and pains in life, and on that account bears a great share in the influence of poetry and the other arts, it is therefore mentioned here, and its effects described. Then follows a general account of the production of these elegant arts, and the secondary pleasure, as it is called, arising from the resemblance of their imitations to the original appearances of nature. After which the design is closed with some re-

flections on the general conduct of the powers of imagination, and on their natural and moral usefulness in life.

Concerning the manner or turn of composition which prevails in this piece, little can be said with propriety by the author. He had two models ; that ancient and simple one of the first Grecian poets, as it is refined by Virgil in the *Georgics* ; and the familiar epistolary way of Horace. This latter has several advantages. It admits of a greater variety of style ; it more readily engages the generality of readers, as partaking more of the air of conversation ; and, especially with the assistance of rhyme, leads to a closer and more concise expression. Add to this the example of the most perfect of modern poets, who has so happily applied this manner to the noblest parts of philosophy, that the public taste is in a great measure formed to it alone. Yet after all, the subject before us, tending almost constantly to admiration and enthusiasm, seemed rather to demand a more open, pathetic, and figured style. This too appeared more natural, as the author's aim was, not so much to give formal precepts, or enter into the way of direct argumentation, as, by exhibiting the most engaging prospects of nature, to enlarge and harmonize the imagination, and by that means insensibly dispose the minds of men to the same dignity of taste in religion, morals, and civil life. It is on this account that he is so careful to point out

the benevolent intention of the author of nature in every principle of the human constitution here insisted on, and also to unite the moral excellences of life in the same point of view with the mere external objects of good taste ; thus recommending them in common to our natural propensity for admiring what is beautiful and lovely. The same views have also led him to introduce some sentiments which may perhaps be looked upon as not quite direct to the subject ; but, since they bear an obvious relation to it, the authority of Virgil, the faultless model of didactic poetry, will best support him in this particular. For the sentiments themselves he makes no apology.

THE
PLEASURES OF IMAGINATION.

BOOK I.

ARGUMENT.

THE subject proposed....Difficulty of treating it poetically...The ideas of the divine mind, the origin of every quality pleasing to the imagination....The natural variety of constitution in the minds of men, with its final cause....The idea of a fine imagination, and the state of the mind in the enjoyment of those pleasures which it affords....All the primary pleasures of imagination result from the perception of greatness, or wonderfulness, or beauty in objects....The pleasure from greatness, with its final cause....Pleasure from novelty or wonderfulness, with its final cause....Pleasure from beauty, with its final cause....The connection of beauty with truth and good, applied to the conduct of life....Invitation to the study of moral philosophy....The different degrees of beauty in different species of objects—colour, shape, natural concretes, vegetables, animals, the mind, the sublime, the fair, the wonderful of the mind....The connection of the imagination and moral faculty....Conclusion.

WITH what attractive charms this goodly frame
Of nature touches the consenting hearts
Of mortal men ; and what the pleasing stores
Which beauteous imitation thence derives
To deck the poet's, or the painter's toil ; 5
My verse unfolds. Attend, ye gentle powers
Of musical delight ! and while I sing

Your gifts, your honours, dance around my strain.
Thou, smiling queen of every tuneful breast,
Indulgent FANCY ! from the fruitful banks 10
Of Avon, whence thy rosy fingers cull
Fresh flowers and dewes to sprinkle on the turf
Where SHAKESPEARE lies, be present, and with thee
Let Fiction come, upon her vagrant wings
Wafting ten thousand colours through the air, 15
Which by the glances of her magic eye,
She blends and shifts at will, through countless forms
Her wild creation. Goddess of the lyre
Which rules the accents of the moving sphere,
Wilt thou, eternal Harmony ! descend, 20
And join this festive train ? for with thee comes
The guide, the guardian of their lovely sports,
Majestic Truth ; and where truth deigns to come,
Her sister Liberty will not be far.
Be present all ye Genii who conduct 25
The wand'ring footsteps of the youthful bard,
New to your springs and shades ; who touch his ear
With finer sounds ; who heighten to his eye
The bloom of nature, and before him turn
The gayest, happiest attitude of things. 30
Oft have the laws of each poetic strain
The critic verse employ'd ; yet still unsung
Lay this prime subject, though importing most
A poet's name ; for fruitless is the attempt,
By dull obedience and the curb of rules, 35

For creeping toil to climb the hard ascent
Of high Parnassus. Nature's kindling breath
Must fire the chosen genius ; nature's hand
Must point the path, and imp his eagle wings
Exulting o'er the painful steep to soar 40
High as the summit ; there to breathe at large
Æthereal air ; with bards and sages old,
Immortal sons of praise. These flattering scenes
To this neglected labour court my song ;
Yet not unconscious what a doubtful task 45
To paint the finest features of the mind,
And to most subtle and mysterious things
Give colour, strength and motion. But the love
Of nature and the muses bids explore,
Thro' secret paths, erewhile untrod by man, 50
The fair poetic region, to detect
Untasted springs, to drink inspiring draughts,
And shade my temples with unfading flowers
Cull'd from the laureate vale's profound recess,
Where never poet gain'd a wreath before. 55

From heav'n my strains begin ; from heav'n descends
The flame of genius to the human breast,
And love and beauty, and poetic joy
And inspiration. Ere the radiant sun
Sprung from the east, or 'mid the vault of night 60
The moon suspended her serener lamp ;
Ere mountains, woods, or streams adorn'd the globe ;
Or wisdom taught the sons of men her lore ;

Then liv'd the eternal *One* ; then deep retir'd
In his unfathom'd essence, view'd at large 65
The uncreated images of things ;
The radiant sun, the moon's nocturnal lamp,
The mountains, woods and streams, the rolling globe
And wisdom's form celestial. From the first
Of days, on them his love divine he fix'd, 70
His admiration ; till, in time complete,
What he admir'd and lov'd, his vital smile
Unfolded into being. Hence the breath
Of life informing each organic frame ;
Hence the green earth, and wild resounding waves ; 75
Hence light and shade alternate ; warmth and cold ;
And clear autumnal skies and vernal showers,
And all the fair variety of things.

But not alike to every mortal eye
Is this great scene unveil'd. For, since the claims 80
Of social life, to different labours urge
The active powers of man---with wise intent
The hand of nature on peculiar minds
Imprints a different bias, and to each
Decrees its province in the common toil. 85
To some she taught the fabric of the sphere,
The changeful moon, the circuit of the stars,
The golden zones of heaven ; to some she gave
To weigh the moment of eternal things,
Of time and space, and fate's unbroken chain, 90
And will's quick impulse ; others by the hand

She led o'er vales and mountains, to explore
What healing virtue swells the tender veins
Of herbs and flowers ; or what the beams of morn
Draw forth, distilling from the clifted rind. 95
In balmy tears. But some to higher hopes
Were destin'd ; some within a finer mould
She wrought, and temper'd with a purer flame.
To these the sire omnipotent unfolds
The world's harmonious volume, there to read 100
The transcript of himself. On every part
They trace the bright impressions of his hand ;
In earth, or air, the meadow's purple stores,
The moon's mild radiance, or the virgin's form
Blooming with rosy smiles, they see pourtray'd 105
That uncreated beauty, which delights
The mind supreme. They also feel her charms,
Enamour'd ; they partake the eternal joy.

As Memnon's marble harp renown'd of old
By fabling Nilus, to the quiv'ring touch 110
Of Titan's ray, with each repulsive string
Consenting, sounded through the warb'ling air
Unbidden strains ; e'en so did nature's hand
To certain species of external things,
Attune the finer organs of the mind ; 115
So the glad impulse of congenial powers,
Or of sweet sound, or fair proportion'd form,
The grace of motion, or the bloom of light,
Thrills through imagination's tender frame,

From nerve to nerve ; all naked and alive 120
They catch the spreading rays ; till now the soul
At length discloses every tuneful spring,
To that harmonious movement from without,
Responsive. Then the inexpressive strain
Diffuses its enchantment ; Fancy dreams 125
Of sacred fountains and Elysian groves,
And vales of bliss ; the intellectual power
Bends from his awful throne a wond'ring ear,
And smiles ; the passions gently sooth'd away,
Sink to divine repose, and love and joy 130
Alone are waking ; love and joy serene
As airs that fan the summer. O, attend,
Whoe'er thou art whom these delights can touch,
Whose candid bosom the refining love
Of nature warms ; O, listen to my song, 135
And I will guide thee to her fav'rite walks,
And teach thy solitude her voice to hear,
And point her loveliest features to thy view.

Know then, whate'er of nature's pregnant stores,
Whate'er of mimic art's reflected forms 140
With love and admiration thus inflame
The powers of fancy, her delighted sons
To three illustrious orders have referr'd ;
Three sister graces, whom the painter's hand,
The poet's tongue confesses : The Sublime, 145
The Wonderful, the Fair. I see them dawn !
I see the radiant visions, where they rise,

More lovely than when Lucifer displays
His beaming forehead thro' the gates of morn,
To lead the train of Phœbus and the spring. 150

Say, why was man so eminently rais'd
Amid the vast creation ; why ordained
Thro' life and death to dart his piercing eye,
With thoughts beyond the limit of his frame ;
But that the omnipotent might send him forth 155
In sight of mortal and immortal powers,
As on a boundless theatre to run
The great career of justice ; to exalt
His generous aim to all diviner deeds ;
To chase each partial purpose from his breast ; 160
And thro' the mists of passion and of sense,
And thro' the tossing tide of chance and pain
To hold his course unfalt'ring, while the voice
Of Truth and Virtue, up the steep ascent
Of nature, calls him to his high reward, 165
The applauding smile of heaven ? else wherefore burns,
In mortal bosoms, this unquenched hope
That breathes from day to day sublimer things,
And mocks possession ? wherefore darts the mind,
With such resistless ardour to embrace 170
Majestic forms ; impatient to be free,
Spurning the gross controul of wilful might ;
Proud of the strong contention of her toils ;
Proud to be daring ? Who but rather turns
To heaven's broad fire his unconstrained view, 175

Than to the glimm'ring of a waxen flame ?
Who that, from Alpine heights, his lab'ring eye
Shoots round the wide horizon to survey
Nilus or Ganges rolling his broad tide
Thro' mountains, plains, thro' empires black with shade,
And continents of sand ; will turn his gaze 181
To mark the windings of a scanty rill
That murmurs at his feet ? The highborn soul
Disdains to rest her heaven aspiring wing
Beneath its native quarry. Tired of earth 185
And this diurnal scene, she springs aloft
Thro' fields of air ; pursues the flying storm ;
Rides on the volley'd lightning thro' the heavens ;
Or, yok'd with whirlwinds and the northern blast,
Sweeps the long track of day. Then high she soars 190
The blue profound, and hovering o'er the sun
Beholds him pouring the redundant stream
Of light' ; beholds his unrelenting sway
Bend the reluctant planets to absolve
The fated rounds of time. Thence far effus'd 195
She darts her swiftness up the long career
Of devious comets ; thro' its burning signs
Exulting circles the perennial wheel
Of nature, and looks back on all the stars,
Whose blended light, as with a milky zone, 200.
Invests the orient. Now amaz'd she views
The empyreal waste, where happy spirits hold,
Beyond this concave heaven, their calm abode ;

And fields of radiance, whose unfading light
Has travell'd the profound six thousand years, 205
Nor yet arriv'd in sight of mortal things.
Even on the barriers of the world untir'd
She meditates the eternal depth below ;
Till, half recoiling, down the headlong steep
She plunges ; soon o'erwhelm'd and swallow'd up 210
In that immense of being. There her hopes
Rest at the fated goal. For from the birth
Of mortal man, the sov'reign Maker said,
That not in humble nor in brief delight,
Not in the fading echoes of renown, 215
Power's purple robes, nor Pleasure's flow'ry lap,
The soul should find enjoyment ; but from these
Turning disdainful to an equal good,
Thro' all the ascent of things enlarge her view,
Till every bound at length should disappear, 220
And infinite perfection close the scene.

Call now to mind what high, capacious powers
Lie folded up in man ; how far beyond
The praise of mortals, may the eternal growth
Of nature to perfection half divine, 225
Expand the blooming soul : What pity then
Should Sloth's unkindly fogs depress to earth
Her tender blossom ; choke the streams of life,
And blast her spring ! Far otherwise design'd
Almighty wisdom ; Nature's happy cares 230
The obedient heart far otherwise incline.

Witness the sprightly joy when aught unknown
Strikes the quick sense, and wakes each active power
To brisker measures ; witness the neglect
Of all familiar prospects, tho' beheld 235
With transport once ; the fond, attentive gaze
Of young astonishment ; the sober zeal
Of age, commenting on prodigious things.
For such the bounteous providence of heaven,
In every breast implanting this desire 240
Of objects new and strange, to urge us on
With unremitted labour to pursue
Those sacred stores that wait the ripening soul,
In Truth's exhaustless bosom. What need words
To paint its power ? For this the daring youth 245
Breaks from his weeping mother's anxious arms,
In foreign climes to rove ; the pensive sage,
Heedless of sleep or midnight's harmful damp,
Hangs o'er the sickly taper ; and untir'd
The virgin follows with enchanted step, 250
The mazes of some wild and wond'rous tale,
From morn to eve ; unmindful of her form,
Unmindful of the happy dress that stole
The wishes of the youth, when every maid
With envy pin'd. Hence, finally, by night 255
The village matron, round the blazing hearth,
Suspends the infant audience with her tales,
Breathing astonishment ! of witching rhymes,
And evil spirits ; of the death-bed call

Of him who robb'd the widow, and devour'd 260
 The orphan's portion : of unquiet souls
 Ris'n from the grave to ease the heavy guilt
 Of deeds in life conceal'd ; of shapes that walk
 At dead of night, and clank their chains, and wave
 The torch of hell around the murderer's bed. 265

At every solemn pause the crowd recoil,
 Gazing each other speechless, and congeal'd
 With shiv'ring sighs ; till, eager for the event,
 Around the beldame all erect they hang,
 Each trembling heart with grateful terrors quell'd. 270

But lo ! disclos'd in all her smiling pomp,
 Where Beauty, onward moving, claims the verse
 Her charms inspire : the freely flowing verse
 In thy immortal praise, O form divine !
 Smooths her mellifluent stream. Thee, Beauty ! thee, 275
 The regal dome, and thy enlivening ray
 The mossy roofs adore ; thou, better sun !
 For ever beamest on the enchanted heart
 Love, and harmonious wonder, and delight
 Poetic. Brightest progeny of heaven ! 280

How shall I trace thy features ? where select
 The roseate hues to emulate thy bloom ?
 Haste then, my song, thro' nature's wide expanse,
 Haste then, and gather all her comeliest wealth,
 Whate'er bright spoils the florid earth contains, 285
 Whate'er the waters, or the liquid air,
 To deck thy lovely labour. Wilt thou fly

With laughing Autumn to the Atlantic isles,
And range with him th' Hesperian field, and see
Where'er his fingers touch the fruitful grove, 290
The branches shoot with gold ; where'er his step
Marks the glad soil, the tender clusters glow
With purple ripeness, and invest each hill
As with the blushes of an evening sky?
Or wilt thou rather stoop thy vagrant plume, 295
Where, gliding thro' his daughter's honour'd shades,
The smooth Peneus from his glassy flood
Reflects purpureal Tempe's pleasant scene?
Fair Tempe ! haunt belov'd of sylvan powers,
Of nymphs and fawns ; where in the golden age 300
They play'd in secret on the shady brink
With ancient Pan ; while round their coral steps
Young hours and genial gales with constant hand
Shower'd blossoms, odours, shower'd ambrosial dews
And spring's Elysian bloom. Her flowery store 305
To thee nor Tempe shall refuse ; nor watch
Of winged Hydra guard Hesperian fruits
From thy free spoil. O bear then, unproved,
Thy smiling treasures to the green recess
Where young Dione stays. With sweetest airs 310
Entice her forth to lend her angel form
For Beauty's honour'd image. Hither turn
Thy graceful footsteps ; hither, gentle maid,
Incline thy polish'd forehead ; let thy eyes
Effuse the mildness of their azure dawn ; 315

And may the fanning breezes waft aside
Thy radiant locks, disclosing, as it bends
With airy softness from the marble neck,
The cheek fair blooming, and the rosy lip
Where winning smiles and pleasure sweet as love, 320
With sanctity and wisdom temp'ring, blend
Their soft allurements. Then the pleasing force
Of nature, and her kind parental care,
Worthier I'd sing; then all the enamour'd youth
With each admiring virgin, to my lyre 325
Should throng attentive, while I point on high
Where Beauty's living image, like the morn
That wakes in zephyr's arms the blushing May,
Moves onward; or as Venus, when she stood
Effulgent on the pearly car, and smil'd, 330
Fresh from the deep, and conscious of her form,
To see the Tritons tune their vocal shells,
And each cœrulean sister of the flood
With loud acclaim attend her o'er the waves,
To seek the Idalian bower. Ye smiling band 335
Of youths and virgins, who, thro' all the maze
Of young desire, with rival steps pursue
This charm of beauty; if the pleasing toil
Can yield a moment's respite, hither turn
Your favourable ear, and trust my words. 340
I do not mean to wake the gloomy form
Of Superstition, drest in Wisdom's garb,
To damp your tender hopes; I do not mean

To bid the jealous thund'rer fire the heavens,
Or shapes infernal rend the groaning earth, 345
To fright you from your joys ; my cheerful song
With better omens calls you to the field,
Pleas'd with your gen'rous ardour in the chase,
And warm like you. Then tell me, for ye know,
Does Beauty ever deign to dwell where health 350
And active use are strangers ? is her charm
Confest in aught whose most peculiar ends
Are lame and fruitless ? or did Nature mean
This pleasing call the herald of a lie,
To hide the shame of discord and disease, 355
And catch with fair hypocrisy the heart
Of idle Faith ? O no ! with better cares
Th' indulgent mother, conscious how infirm
Her offspring tread the paths of good and ill,
By this illustrious image, in each kind 360
Still more illustrious where the object holds
Its native pow'rs most perfect, she by this
Illumes the headlong impulse of Desire,
And sanctifies his choice. The gen'rous glebe
Whose bosom smiles with verdure, the clear track 365
Of streams delicious to the thirsty soul,
The bloom of nectar'd fruitage ripe to sense,
And ev'ry charm of animated things,
Are only pledges of a state sincere,
Th' integrity and order of their frame 370
When all is well within, and ev'ry end

Accomplished. Thus was Beauty sent from Heav'n
The lovely mistress of Truth and Good
In this dark world ; for Truth and Good are one,
And Beauty dwells in them, and they in her, 375
With like participation ; wherefore then,
O sons of Earth ! would ye dissolve the tie ?
O ! wherefore with a rash impetuous aim
Seek ye those flow'ry joys with which the hand
Of lavish Fancy paints each flatt'ring scene 380
Where Beauty seems to dwell, nor once inquire
Where is the sanction of eternal Truth,
Or where the seal of undeceitful good,
To save your search from folly ! Wanting these,
Lo ! Beauty withers in your void embrace, 385
And with the glitt'ring of an idiot's toy
Did Fancy mock your vows. Nor let the gleam
Of youthful hope, that shines upon your hearts,
Be chill'd or clouded at this awful task,
To learn the lore of undeceitful good 390
And truth eternal. Tho' the pois'nous charms
Of baleful Superstition guide the feet
Of servile numbers thro' a dreary way
To their abode, thro' deserts, thorns, and mire,
And leave the wretched pilgrim all forlorn, 395
To muse at last amid the ghostly gloom
Of graves, and hoary vaults, and cloister'd cells,
To walk with spectres thro' the midnight shade,
And to the screaming owl's accursed song

Attune the dreadful workings of his heart ; 400
Yet be not ye dismay'd ; a gentler star
Your lovely search illumines. From the grove
Where Wisdom talk'd with her Athenian sons,
Could my ambitious hand entwine a wreath
Of *Plato's* olive with the Mantuan bay, 405
Then should my powerful Verse at once dispel
Those monkish horrors : then in light divine
Disclose the Elysian prospect, where the steps
Of those whom nature charms, thro' blooming walks,
Thro' fragrant mountains and poetic streams, 410
Amid the train of sages, heroes, bards,
Led by their winged Genius and the choir
Of laurell'd Science and harmonious Art,
Proceed exulting to the eternal shrine,
Where Truth enthron'd with the celestial twins, 415
The undivided partner of her sway,
With Good and Beauty reigns. O let not us,
Lull'd by luxurious Pleasure's languid strain,
Or crouching to the frowns of bigot Rage,
O let us not a moment pause to join 420
That godlike band ! And if the gracious power
Who first awaken'd my untutor'd song,
Will to my invocation breathe anew
The tuneful spirit ; then thro' all our paths,
Ne'er shall the sound of this devoted lyre 425
Be wanting ; whether on the rosy mead,
When summer smiles, to warn the melting heart

Of luxury's allurements, whether firm
Against the torrent and the stubborn hill
To urge bold Virtue's unremitted nerve, 430
And wake the strong divinity of soul
That conquers Chance and Fate, or whether struck
For sounds of triumph to proclaim her toils
Upon the lofty summit, round her brow
To twine the wreath of incorruptive praise, 435
To trace her hallow'd light thro' future worlds,
And bless Heaven's image in the heart of man.

Thus with a faithful aim have we presum'd
Advent'rous to delineate Nature's form,
Whether in vast majestic pomp array'd, 440
Or drest for pleasing wonder, or serene
In Beauty's rosy smile. It now remains
Thro' various Being's fair proportion'd scale
To trace the rising lustre of her charms
From their first twilight, shining forth at length 445
To full meridian splendor. Of degree
The least and lowliest in th' effusive warmth
Of colours mingling with a random blaze
Doth Beauty dwell; then higher in the line
And variation of determin'd shape, 450
Where Truth's eternal measures mark the bound
Of circle, cube, or sphere: the third ascent
Unites the vary'd symmetry of parts
With colours bland allurements, as the pearl
Shines in the concave of its azure bed, 455

And painted shells indent their speckled wreath.
Then more attractive rise the blooming forms
Thro' which the breath of Nature has infus'd
Her genial pow'r to draw with pregnant veins
Nutritious moisture from the bounteous earth 460
In fruit and seed prolific : thus the flow'rs
Their purple honours with the Spring resume,
And such the stately tree which autumn bends
With blushing treasures. But more lovely still,
Is Nature's charm, where, to the full consent 465
Of complicated members, to the bloom
Of colour, and the vital change of growth,
Life's holy flame and piercing sense are given,
And active motion speaks the temper'd soul :
So moves the bird of Juno ; so the steed 470
With rival ardor beats the dusty plain,
And faithful dogs with eager airs of joy
Salute their fellows. Thus doth Beauty dwell
There most conspicuous, e'en in outward shape,
Where dawns the high expression of a mind, 475
By steps conducting our enraptur'd search
To that eternal Origin, whose power,
Thro' all the unbounded symmetry of things,
Like rays effulging from the parent sun,
This endless mixture of her charms diffus'd. 480
Mind, mind alone, (bear witness, earth and heaven !)
The living fountain in itself contains
Of beauteous and sublime ; here hand in hand,

Sit paramount the Graces ; here enthron'd,
Celestial Venus, with divinest airs 485
Invites the sôul to never-fading joy.
Look, then, abroad thro' Nature, to the range
Of planets, suns, and adamantine spheres,
Wheeling unshaken thro' the void immense ;
And speak, O man ! does this capacious scene 490
With half that kindling majesty dilate
Thy strong conception, as when Brutus rose
Refulgent from the stroke of Cæsar's fate,
Amid the crowd of patriots ; and his arm
Aloft extending, like eternal Jove, 495
When guilt brings down the thunder, call'd aloud
On Tully's name, and shook his crimson steel,
And bade the father of his country, hail !
For lo ! the tyrant prostrate on the dust,
And Rome again is free ! Is aught so fair 500
In all the dewy landscapes of the spring,
In the bright eye of Hesper or the morn,
In Nature's fairest forms, is aught so fair
As virtuous Friendship ? as the candid blush
Of him who strives with Fortune to be just ? 505
The graceful tear that streams for others' woes ?
Or the mild majesty of private life,
Where Peace with ever-blooming olive crowns
The gate ; where Honour's liberal hands effuse
Unenvy'd treasures, and the snowy wings 510
Of Innocence and Love protect the scene ?

Once more search undismay'd the dark profound
Where Nature works in secret, view the beds
Of mineral treasure, and th' eternal vault
That bounds the hoary ocean ; trace the forms 515
Of atoms moving with incessant change
Their elemental round ; behold the seeds
Of being, and the energy of life
Kindling the mass with ever active flame ;
Then to the secrets of the working Mind 520
Attentive turn ; from dim oblivion call
Her fleet ideal band, and bid them go ;
Break thro' time's barrier, and o'ertake the hour
That saw the heav'ns created ; then declare
If aught were found in those external scenes 525
To move thy wonder now. For what are all
The forms which brute unconscious matter wears,
Greatness of bulk, or symmetry of parts ?
Not reaching to the heart, soon feeble grows
The superficial impulse ; dull their charms, 530
And satiate soon, and pall the languid eye.
Not so the moral species, nor the powers
Of gènius and design : th' ambitious mind
There sees herself ; by these congenial forms
Touch'd and awaken'd, with intenser act 535
She bends each nerve, and meditates well-pleas'd
Her features in the mirror : for of all
The inhabitants of earth, to man alone
Creative Wisdom gave to lift his eye

To Truth's eternal measures, thence to frame 540
The sacred laws of action and of will,
Discerning justice from unequal deeds,
And temperance from folly. But beyond
This energy of truth, whose dictates bind
Assenting reason, the benignant Sire, 545
To deck the honour'd paths of just and good,
Has added bright Imagination's rays,
Where Virtue, rising from the awful depth
Of Truth's mysterious bosom, doth forsake
Th' unadorn'd condition of her birth, 550
And, dress'd by Fancy in ten thousand hues,
Assumes a various feature, to attract
With charms responsive to each gazer's eye
The hearts of men. Amid his rural walk
Th' ingenuous youth, whom solitude inspires 555
With purest wishes, from the pensive shade
Beholds her moving like a virgin Muse,
That wakes her lyre to some indulgent theme
Of harmony and wonder, while among
The herd of servile minds her strenuous form 560
Indignant flashes on the patriots eye,
And thro' the rolls of memory appeals
To ancient honour ; or, in act serene,
Yet watchful, raises the majestic sword
Of public pow'r, from dark Ambition's reach, 565
To guard the sacred volume of the laws.
Genius of ancient Greece ! whose faithful steps

Well pleas'd I follow thro' the sacred paths
Of Nature and of Science ; Nurse divine
Of all heroic deeds and fair desires ! 570
O let the breath of thy extended praise
Inspire my kindling bosom to the height
Of this untempted theme ! Nor be my thoughts
Presumptuous counted, if, amid the calm
That soothes this vernal ev'ning into smiles, 575
I steal impatient from the sordid haunts
Of strife and low Ambition, to attend
Thy sacred presence in the sylvan shade,
By their malignant footsteps ne'er profan'd.
Descend propitious to my favour'd eye ! 580
Such in thy mien, thy warm exalted air,
As when the Persian tyrant, foil'd and stung
With shame and desperation, gnash'd his teeth
To see thee rend the pageants of his throne,
And at the lightning of thy lifted spear 585
Couch'd like a slave. Bring all thy martial spoils,
Thy palms, thy laurels, thy triumphal songs,
Thy smiling band of arts, thy godlike sires
Of civil wisdom, the heroic youth,
Warm from the schools of glory. Guide my way 590
Thro' fair Lyceum's walk, the green retreats
Of Academus, and the thymy vale
Where oft', enchanted with Socratic sounds,
Illissus pure devolv'd his tuneful stream
In gentler murmurs. From the blooming store 595

Of these auspicious fields may I unblam'd
Transplant some living blossoms to adorn
My native clime ; while far above the flight
Of fancy's plume aspiring, I unlock
The springs of ancient wisdom ; while I join 600
Thy name, thrice honour'd ! with th' immortal praise
Of Nature ; while to my compatriot youth
I point the high example of thy sons,
And tune to Attic themes the British lyre ?

L. 591. *Lyceum....*] The school of Aristotle.

L. 592. *Academy.*] The school of Plato.

 BOOK II.

ARGUMENT.

THE separation of the works of Imagination from philosophy, the cause of their abuse among the Moderns....Prospect of their reunion under the influence of public liberty....Enumeration of accidental Pleasures, which increase the effect of objects delightful to the Imagination....The pleasures of sense....Particular circumstances of the mind....Discovery of truth....Perception of contrivance and design....Emotion of the passions....All the natural passions partake of a pleasing sensation, with the final cause of this constitution illustrated by an allegorical vision, and exemplified in sorrow, pity, terror, and indignation.

WHEN shall the laurel and the vocal string
 Resume their honours ? when shall we behold
 The tuneful tongue, the Promethean hand,
 Aspire to ancient praise ? Alas ! how faint,
 How slow, the dawn of Beauty and of Truth 5
 Breaks the reluctant shades of Gothic night
 Which yet involve the nations ! Long they groan'd
 Beneath the furies of rapacious Force,
 Oft as the gloomy North with Iron swarms
 Tempest'ous pouring from her frozen caves 10
 Blasted the Italian Shore, and swept the works
 Of Liberty and Wisdom down the gulf

Of all-devouring Night. As long, immur'd
In noontide darkness by the glimm'ring lamp,
Each Muse and each fair Science pin'd away 15
The sordid hours, while foul Barbarian hands
Their mysteries profan'd, unstrung the lyre,
And chain'd the soaring pinion down to earth.
At last the Muses rose and spurn'd their bonds,
And wildly warbling scatter'd as they flew 20
Their blooming wreaths from fair Valclusa's bowers
To Arno's myrtle border, and the shore
Of soft Parthenope. But still the rage
Of dire Ambition and gigantic Pow'r
From public aims, and from the busy walk 25
Of civil Commerce, drove the bolder train
Of penetrating Science to the cells
Where studious Ease consumes the silent hour
In shadowy searches and unfruitful care.
Thus from their guardians torn, the tender arts 30
Of mimic fancy and harmonious joy
To priestly domination and the lust
Of lawless courts, their amiable toil
For three inglorious ages have resign'd,
In vain reluctant, and Torquato's tongue 35
Was tun'd for slavish Pæans at the throne
Of tinsel pomp, and Raphael's magic hand
Effus'd its fair creation to enchant
The fond adoring herd in Latian fanes
To blind belief, while on their prostrate necks 40

The sable tyrant plants his heel secure.
But now, behold ! the radiant era dawns
When Freedom's ample fabric, fix'd at length
For endless years on Albion's happy shore,
In full proportion once more shall extend 43
To all the kindred powers of social bliss
A common mansion, a parental roof :
There shall the Virtues, there shall Wisdom's train,
Their long-lost friends rejoining, as of old,
Embrace the smiling family of Arts, 50
The Muses and the Graces. Then no more
Shall Vice, distracting their delicious gifts
To aims abhorr'd, with high distaste and scorn
Turn from their charms the philosophic eye,
The patriot bosom ; then no more the paths 55
Of public care or intellectual toil
Alone by footsteps haughty and severe
In gloomy state be trod : th' harmonious Muse
And her persuasive sisters then shall plant
Their shelt'ring laurels o'er the bleak ascent, 60
And scatter flow'rs along the rugged way.
Arm'd with the lyre, already have we dar'd
To pierce divine Philosophy's retreats,
And teach the Muse her lore, already strove
Their long divided honours to unite, 65
While temp'ring this deep argument we sang
Of Truth and Beauty. Now the same glad task
Impends ; now urging our ambitious toil,

We hasten to recount the various springs
Of adventitious Pleasure, which adjoin 70
Their grateful influence to the prime effect
Of objects grand or beauteous, and enlarge
The complicated joy. The sweets of sense
Do they not oft with kind accession flow
To raise harmonious Fancy's native charm ? 75
So while we taste the fragrance of the rose
Glow not her blush the fairer ? while we view
Amid the noontide walk a limpid rill
Gush thro' the trickling herbage, to the thirst
Of summer yielding the delicious draught 80
Of cool refreshment, o'er the mossy brink
Shines not the surface clearer, and the waves
With sweeter music murmur as they flow ?
Nor this alone. The various lot of life
Oft from external circumstance assumes 85
A moment's disposition to rejoice
In those delights which at a diff'rent hour
Would pass unheeded. Fair the face of Spring
When rural songs and odours wake the Morn
To ev'ry eye ; but how much more to his 90
Round whom the bed of sickness long diffus'd
Its melancholy gloom ! how doubly fair
When first with fresh-born vigour he inhales
The balmy breeze, and feels the blessed sun
Warm at his bosom, from the springs of life 95
Chasing oppressive damps and languid pain !

Or shall I mention where celestial Truth
Her awful light discloses, to bestow
A more majestic pomp on Beauty's frame ?
For man loves knowledge, and the beams of truth 100
More welcome touch his understanding's eye
Than all the blandishments of sound his ear,
Than all of taste his tongue. Nor ever yet
The melting rainbow's vernal-tinctur'd hues
To me have shone so pleasing, as when first 105
The hand of Science pointed out the path
In which the sun-beams, gleaming from the west,
Fall on the wat'ry cloud whose darksome veil
Involves the orient ; and that trickling show'r
Piercing thro' ev'ry crystalline convex 110
Of clust'ring dew-drops to their flight oppos'd,
Recoil at length where concave all behind
Th' internal furnace of each glossy orb
Repels their forward passage into air,
That thence direct they seek the radiant goal 115
From which their course began, and, as they strike
In diff'rent lines the gazer's obvious eye,
Assume a diff'rent lustre thro' the brede
Of colours changing from the splendid rose
To the pale violet's dejected hue. 120

Or shall we touch that kind access of joy
That springs to each fair object while we trace
Thro' all its fabric Wisdom's artful aim
Disposing ev'ry part, and gaining still

By means proportion'd her benignant end ? 125
Speak ye the pure delight whose favour'd steps
The lamp of Science thro' the jealous maze
Of Nature guides when haply you reveal
Her secret honours, whether in the sky,
The beauteous laws of light, the central pow'rs 130
That wheel the pensile planets round the year,
Whether in wonders of the rolling deep,
Or the rich fruits of all-sustaining earth,
Or fine-adjusted springs of life and sense,
Ye scan the counsels of their Author's hand. 135

What, when to raise the meditated scene
The flame of passion, thro' the struggling soul
Deep-kindled, shows across that sudden blaze
The object of its rapture, vast of size,
With fiercer colours and a night of shade ? 140
What ? like a storm from their capacious bed
The sounding seas o'erwhelming, when the might
Of these eruptions, working from the depth
Of man's strong apprehension, shakes his frame
E'en to the base, from ev'ry naked sense 145
Of pain or pleasure dissipating all
Opinion's feeble cov'rings, and the veil
Spun from the cobweb fashion of the times
To hide the feeling heart ? then Nature speaks
Her genuine language, and the words of men, 150
Big with the very motion of their souls,
Declare with what accumulated force

The impetuous nerve of passion urges on
The native weight and energy of things.

Yet more her honours : where nor beauty claims, 155
Nor shews of good the thirsty sense allure,
From passion's pow'r alone our nature holds
Essential Pleasure. Passion's fierce illapse
Rouses the mind's whole fabric, with supplies
Of daily impulse keeps th' elastic pow'rs 160

Intensely pois'd, and polishes anew,
By that collision, all the fine machine ;
Else rust would rise, and foulness, by degrees
Incumb'ring, choke at last what Heav'n design'd
For ceaseless motion and a round of toil. 165

....But say, does ev'ry passion thus to man
Administer delight ? That name indeed
Becomes the rosy breath of Love, becomes
The radiant smiles of Joy, th' applauding hand
Of Admiration ; but the bitter show'r 170

That Sorrow sheds upon her brother's grave,
But the dumb palsy of nocturnal Fear,
Or those consuming fires that gnaw the heart
Of panting Indignation, find we there

To move delight ?....Then listen while my tongue 175

Th' unalter'd will of Heav'n with faithful awe
Reveals what old Harmodius wont to teach
My early age ; Harmodius ! who had weigh'd
Within his learned mind whate'er the schools
Of Wisdom, or thy lonely-whisp'ring voice, 180

O faithful nature ! dictate of the laws
 Which govern and support this mighty frame
 Of universal being : oft the hours
 From morn to eve have stol'n unmark'd away,
 While mute attention hung upon his lips, 185
 As thus the sage his awful tale began :

“ 'Twas in the windings of an ancient wood,
 “ When spotless youth with solitude resigns
 “ To sweet philosophy the studious day,
 “ What time pale Autumn shades the silent eve, 190
 “ Musing I rov'd. Of good and evil much,
 “ And much of mortal man, my thought revolv'd ;
 “ When starting full on Fancy's gushing eye,
 “ The mournful image of Parthenia's fate
 “ That hour, O long belov'd and long deplor'd ! 195
 “ When blooming youth nor gentlest Wisdom's arts,
 “ Nor Hymen's honours gather'd for thy brow,
 “ Nor all thy lover's, all thy father's tears,
 “ Avail'd to snatch thee from the cruel grave :
 “ Thy agonizing looks, thy last farewell, 200
 “ Struck to the inmost feeling of my soul
 “ As with the hand of Death ! At once the shade
 “ More horrid nodded o'er me, and the winds
 “ With hoarser murm'ring shook the branches. Dark
 “ As midnight storms the scene of human things 205
 “ Appear'd before me ; deserts, burning sands,
 “ Where the parch'd adder dies ; the frozen south,
 “ And desolation blasting all the west

- “ With rapine and with murder ; tyrant Pow’r
“ Here sits enthron’d with blood ; the baleful charms
“ Of superstition there infect the skies, 211
“ And turn the sun to horror. Gracious Heav’n !
“ What is the life of man ? or cannot these,
“ Not these portents, thy awful will suffice ?
“ That, propagated thus beyond their scope, 215
“ They rise to act their cruelties anew
“ In my afflicted bosom, thus decreed
“ The universal sensitive of pain,
“ The wretched heir of evils not its own !
“ Thus I, impatient ; when at once effus’d, 220
“ A flashing torrent of celestial day
“ Burst through the shadowy void. With slow descent
“ A purple cloud came floating through the sky,
“ And pois’d at length within the circling trees,
“ Hung obvious to my view ; till opening wide 225
“ Its lucid orb, a more than human form
“ Emerging lean’d majestic o’er my head,
“ And instant thunder shook the conscious grove.
“ Then melted into air the liquid cloud,
“ And all the shining vision stood reveal’d. 230
“ A wreath of palm his ample forehead bound,
“ And o’er his shoulder mantling to his knee
“ Flow’d the transparent robe, around his waist
“ Collected with a radiant zone of gold
“ Ethereal ; there in mystic signs engrav’d 235
“ I read his office high, and sacred name,

- " Genius of Humankind. Appall'd I gaz'd
 " The godlike presence, for athwart his brow
 " Displeasure, temper'd with a mild concern,
 " Look'd down reluctant on me, and his words 240
 " Like distant thunders broke the murm'ring air."
 " Vain are thy thoughts, O child of mortal birth !
 " And impotent thy tongue. Is thy short span
 " Capacious of this universal frame ?
 " Thy wisdom all-sufficient ? Thou, alas ! 245
 " Dost thou aspire to judge between the Lord
 " Of nature and his works ? to lift thy voice
 " Against the sovereign order he decreed
 " All good and lovely ? To blaspheme the bands
 " Of tenderness innate and social love, 250
 " Holiest of things ! by which the gen'ral orb
 " Of being, as by adamantine links,
 " Was drawn to perfect union, and sustain'd
 " From everlasting ? Hast thou felt the pangs
 " Of soft'ning sorrow, of indignant zeal, 255
 " So grievous to the soul, as thence to wish
 " The ties of Nature broken from thy frame,
 " That so thy selfish unrelenting heart
 " Might cease to mourn its lot no longer then
 " The wretched heir of evils not its own ? 260
 " O fair benevolence of gen'rous minds !
 " O man by Nature form'd for all mankind !"
 " He spoke ; abash'd and silent I remain'd,
 " As conscious of my tongue's offence, and aw'd

- “ Before his presence, though my secret soul 265
“ Disdain’d the imputation. On the ground
“ I fix’d my eyes, till from his airy couch
“ He stoop’d sublime, and touching with his hand
“ My dazzling forehead, “ Raise thy sight,” he cry’d,
“ And let thy sense convince thy erring tongue.” 270
“ I look’d and lo ! the former scene was chang’d ;
“ For verdant alleys, and surrounding trees
“ A solitary prospect, wide and wild,
“ Rush’d on my senses. ’Twas a horrid pile
“ Of hills with many a shaggy forest mix’d, 275
“ With many a sable cliff and glitt’ring stream.
“ Aloft recumbent o’er the hanging ridge
“ The brown woods wav’d, while ever-trickling springs
“ Wash’d from the naked roots of oak and pine
“ The crumbling soil ; and still at ev’ry fall 280
“ Down the steep windings of the channell’d rock
“ Remurm’ring rush’d the congregated floods
“ With hoarser inundation, till at last
“ They reach’d a grassy plain, which from the skirts
“ Of that high desert spread her verdant lap, 285
“ And drank the gushing moisture where confin’d
“ In one smooth current o’er the liliated vale
“ Clearer than glass it flow’d. Autumnal spoils,
“ Luxuriant spreading to the rays of morn,
“ Blush’d o’er the cliffs, whose half encircling mound 290
“ As in a sylvan theatre enclos’d
“ That flow’ry level. On the river’s brink

- “ I spy’d a fair pavilion, which diffus’d
“ Its floating umbrage ’mid the silver shade
“ Of osiers. Now the western sun reveal’d 295
“ Between two parting cliffs his golden orb,
“ And pour’d across the shadow of the hills,
“ On rocks and floods, a yellow stream of light
“ That cheer’d the solemn scene. My list’ning powr’s
“ Were aw’d, and ev’ry thought in silence hung 300
“ And wond’ring expectation : then the voice
“ Of that celestial pow’r the mystic show
“ Declaring, thus my deep attention call’d :”
 “ Inhabitant of earth, to whom is giv’n
“ The gracious ways of Providence to learn, 305
“ Receive my sayings with a stedfast ear....
“ Know then the Sov’reign Spirit of the world,
“ Tho’ self-collected from eternal time,
“ Within his own deep essence he beheld
“ The bounds of true felicity complete, 310
“ Yet, by immense benignity inclin’d
“ To spread around him that primeval joy
“ Which fill’d himself, he rais’d his plastic arm,
“ And sounded thro’ the hollow depth of space
“ The strong creative mandate ; straight arose 315
“ These heav’nly orbs, the glad abodes of life,
“ Effusive kindled by his breath divine
“ Thro’ endless forms of being : each inhal’d
“ From him its portion of the vital flame
“ In measure such, that from the wild complex 320

- “ Of co-existent orders one might rise,
“ One order, all-involving and entire.
“ He too beholding in the sacred light
“ Of his essential reason all the shapes
“ Of swift contingency, all successive ties 325
“ Of action propagated thro’ the sum
“ Of possible existence, he at once
“ Down the long series of eventful time
“ So fix’d the dates of being, so dispos’d
“ To ev’ry living soul of ev’ry kind 330
“ The field of motion and the hour of rest,
“ That all conspir’d to his supreme design,
“ To universal good ; with full accord
“ Answ’ring the mighty model he had chos’n,
“ The best and fairest of unnumber’d worlds, 335
“ That lay from everlasting in the store
“ Of his divine conceptions. Nor content
“ By one exertion of creative pow’r
“ His goodness to reveal, thro’ ev’ry age,
“ Thro’ ev’ry moment up the track of time, 340
“ His parent hand with ever-new increase
“ Of happiness and virtue has adorn’d
“ The vast harmonious frame : his parent hand,
“ From the mute shellfish gasping on the shore,
“ To men, to angels, to celestial minds, 345
“ For ever leads the generations on
“ To higher scenes of being, while, supply’d
“ From day to day with his enliv’ning breath,

- “ Inferior orders in succession rise
“ To fill the void below. As flame ascends, 350
“ As bodies to their proper centre move,
“ As the pois’d ocean to th’ attracting moon
“ Obedient swells, and ev’ry headlong stream
“ Devolves its winding waters to the main,
“ So all things which have life aspire to God, 355
“ The sun of being, boundless, unimpair’d,
“ Centre of souls : nor does the faithful voice
“ Of nature cease to prompt their eager steps
“ Aright, nor is the care of Heav’n withheld
“ From granting to the task proportion’d aid, 360
“ That in their station all may persevere
“ To climb th’ ascent of being, and approach
“ Forever nearer to the life divine.
“ That rocky pile thou seest, that verdant lawn,
“ Fresh water’d from the mountains. Let the scene
“ Paint in thy fancy the primeval seat 366
“ Of man, and where the Will Supreme ordain’d
“ His mansion ; that pavillion, fair diffus’d
“ Along the shady brink, in this recess,
“ To wear th’ appointed season of his youth, 370
“ Till riper hours should open to his toil
“ The high communion of superior minds,
“ Of consecrated heroes and of gods.
“ Nor did the Sire Omnipotent forget
“ His tender bloom to cherish ; nor withheld 375
“ Celestial footsteps from his green abode.

“ Oft from the radiant honours of his throne,
“ He sent whom most he lov’d, the sovereign fair,
“ The effluence of his glory, whom he plac’d
“ Before his eyes forever to behold ; 380
“ The goddess from whose inspiration flows
“ The toil of patriots, the delight of friends ;
“ Without whose work divine in heav’n or earth
“ Nought lovely, nought propitious comes to pass,
“ Nor hope, nor praise, nor honour. Her the sire 385
“ Gave it in charge to rear the blooming mind,
“ The folded pow’rs to open, to direct
“ The growth luxuriant of his young desires,
“ And from the laws of this majestic world
“ To teach him what was good. As thus the nymph
“ Her daily care attended, by her side 391
“ With constant steps her gay companion stay’d,
“ The fair Euphrosyne ! the gentle queen
“ Of smiles, and graceful gladness, and delights
“ That cheer alike the hearts of mortal men 395
“ And pow’rs immortal. See the shining pair !
“ Behold, where from his dwelling now disclos’d,
“ They quit their youthful charge and seek the skies.
“ I look’d, and on the flow’ry turf there stood,
“ Between two radiant forms, a smiling youth 400
“ Whose tender cheeks display’d the vernal flow’r
“ Of beauty ; sweetest innocence illum’d
“ His bashful eyes, and on his polish’d brow
“ Sat young Simplicity. With fond regard

- “ He view’d th’ associates, as their steps they mov’d ;
“ The younger chief his ardent eyes detain’d, 406
“ With mild regret invoking her return.
“ Bright as the star of ev’ning she appear’d
“ Amid the dusky scene. Eternal youth
“ O’er all her form its glowing honours breath’d, 410
“ And smiles eternal, from her candid eyes,
“ Flow’d like the dewy lustre of the morn
“ Effusive trembling on the placid waves.
“ The spring of heav’n had shed its blushing spoils
“ To bind her sable tresses ; full diffus’d, 415
“ Her yellow mantle floated on the breeze ;
“ And in her hand she wav’d a living branch
“ Rich with immortal fruits, of power to calm
“ The wrathful heart, and from the bright’ning eyes
“ To chase the cloud of sadness. More sublime 420
“ The heav’nly partner mov’d. The prime of age
“ Compos’d her steps. The presence of a god,
“ High on the circle of her brow enthron’d,
“ From each majestic motion darted awe,
“ Devoted awe ! till cherish’d by her looks, 425
“ Benevolent and meek, confiding love
“ To filial rapture soften’d all the soul.
“ Free in her graceful hand she pois’d the sword
“ Of chaste dominion : an heroic crown
“ Display’d the old simplicity of pomp 430
“ Around her honour’d head : a matron’s robe
“ White as the sunshine streams thro’ vernal clouds,

- “ Her stately form invested. Hand in hand
“ Th’ immortal pair forsook the enamell’d green,
“ Ascending slowly : rays of limpid light 435
“ Gleam’d round their path ; celestial sounds were heard,
“ And thro’ the fragrant air ethereal dews
“ Distill’d around them, till at once the clouds,
“ Disparting wide in midway sky, withdrew
“ Their airy veil, and left a bright expanse 440
“ Of empyrean flame, where spent and drown’d,
“ Afflicted vision plung’d in vain to scan
“ What object it involv’d. My feeble eyes
“ Endur’d not. Bending down to earth, I stood
“ With dumb attention. Soon a female voice, 445
“ As wat’ry murmurs sweet or warbling shades;
“ With sacred invocation thus began :”
“ Father of gods and mortals ! whose right arm
“ With reins eternal guides the moving heav’ns,
“ Bend thy propitious ear : behold well pleas’d 450
“ I seek to finish thy divine decree.
“ With frequent steps I visit yonder seat
“ Of man, thy offspring, from the tender seeds
“ Of justice and of wisdom to evolve
“ The latent honours of his gen’rous frame, 455
“ Till thy conducting hand shall raise his lot
“ From earth’s dim scene to these ethereal walks,
“ The temple of thy glory. But not me,
“ Not my directing voice, he oft requires,
“ Or hears delighted : this enchanting maid, 460

“ Th’ associate thou hast giv’n me, her alone

“ He loves, O Father ! absent her he craves ;

“ And but for her glad presence ever join’d

“ Rejoices not in mine ; that all my hopes

“ This thy benignant purpose to fulfil 465

“ I deem uncertain, and my daily cares

“ Unfruitful all in vain, unless by thee

“ Still farther aided in the work divine.”

“ She ceas’d ; a voice more awful thus reply’d :”

“ O thou ! in whom for ever I delight, 470

“ Fairer than all th’ inhabitants of heav’n,

“ Best image of thy Author ! far from thee

“ Be disappointment, or distaste, or blame,

“ Who soon or late shalt ev’ry work fulfil,

“ And no resistance find. If man refuse 475

“ To hearken to thy dictates ; or, allur’d

“ By meaner joys, to any other pow’r

“ Transfer the honours due to thee alone ;

“ That joy which he pursues he ne’er shall taste,

“ That pow’r in whom delighteth ne’er behold. 480

“ Go then once more, and happy be thy toil ;

“ Go then ! but let not this thy smiling friend

“ Partake thy footsteps. In her stead, behold !

“ With thee the son of Nemesis I send ;

“ The fiend abhorr’d ! whose vengeance takes account

“ Of sacred Order’s violated laws. 486

“ See where he calls thee, burning to be gone,

“ Fierce to exhaust the tempest of his wrath

- “ On yon devoted head. But thou my Child !
“ Controll his cruel frenzy, and protect 490
“ Thy tender charge, that when despair shall grasp
“ His agonizing bosom, he may learn,
“ Then he may learn, to love that gracious hand
“ Alone sufficient in the hour of ill
“ To save his feeble spirit ; then confess 495
“ Thy genuine honours, O excelling Fair !
“ When all the plagues that wait the deadly will
“ Of this avenging demon, all the storms
“ Of night infernal, serve but to display
“ Th’ energy of thy superiour charms, 500
“ With mildest awe triumphant o’er his rage,
“ And shining clearer in the horrid gloom.”
“ Here ceas’d that awful voice, and soon I felt
“ The cloudy curtain of refreshing eve
“ Was clos’d once more, from that immortal fire 505
“ Shelt’ring my eyelids. Looking up, I view’d
“ A vast gigantic spectre striding on,
“ Thro’ murm’ring thunders and a waste of clouds,
“ With dreadful action. Black as night his brow
“ Relentless frowns involv’d : his savage limbs 510
“ With sharp impatience violent he writh’d
“ As thro’ convulsive anguish ; and his hand,
“ Arm’d with a scorpion lash, full oft he rais’d
“ In madness to his bosom ; while his eyes
“ Rain’d bitter tears, and bellowing loud he shook 515
“ The void with horror. Silent by his side

“ The virgin came ; no discomposure stirr’d ✓
“ Her features ; from the glooms which hung around
“ No stain of darkness mingled with the beam
“ Of her divine effulgence. Now they stoop 520
“ Upon the river bank, and now to hail
“ His wonted guests with eager steps advanc’d
“ The unsuspecting inmate of the shade.

“ As when a famish’d wolf, that all night long
“ Has rang’d the Alpine snows, by chance at morn 525
“ Sees, from a cliff incumbent, o’er the smoke
“ Of some lone village, a neglected kid
“ That strays along the wild for herb or spring,
“ Down from the winding ridge he sweeps amain,
“ And thinks he tears him ; so with tenfold rage 530
“ The monster sprung remorseless on his prey.
“ Amaz’d the stripling stood ; with panting breast
“ Feebly he pour’d the lamentable wail
“ Of helpless consternation, struck at once
“ And rooted to the ground. The queen beheld 535
“ His terror, and with looks of tend’rest care
“ Advanc’d to save him. Soon the tyrant felt
“ Her awful pow’r : his keen tempest’ous arm
“ Hung nerveless, nor descended where his rage
“ Had aim’d the deadly blow, then dumb retir’d 540
“ With sullen rancour. Lo ! the sov’reign maid
“ Folds with a mother’s arms the fainting boy
“ Till life rekindles in his rosy cheek,
“ Then grasps his hands, and cheers him with her tongue.

“ O wake thee, rouse thy spirit ! shall the spite 545
“ Of yon tormentor thus appal thy heart,
“ While I, thy friend and guardian, am at hand
“ To rescue and to heal ? O let thy soul
“ Remember what the will of Heav’n ordains
“ Is ever good for all ; and if for all, 550
“ Then good for thee. Nor only by the warmth
“ And soothing sunshine of delightful things
“ Do minds grow up and flourish. Oft misled
“ By that bland light, the young unpractis’d views
“ Of reason wander thro’ a fatal road, 555
“ Far from their native aim, as if to lie
“ Inglorious in the fragrant shade, and wait
“ The soft access of ever-circling joys,
“ Were all the end of being. Ask thyself,
“ This pleasing error, did it never lull 560
“ Thy wishes ? has thy constant heart refus’d
“ The silken fetters of delicious ease ?
“ Or when divine Euphrosyne appear’d
“ Within this dwelling, did not thy desires
“ Hang far below the measure of thy fate 565
“ Which I reveal’d before thee ? and thy eyes
“ Impatient of my counsels turn away
“ To drink the soft effusion of her smiles ?
“ Know then for this the Everlasting Sire
“ Deprives thee of her presence, and instead, 570
“ O wise and still benevolent ! ordains
“ This horrid visage hither to pursue

“ My steps, that so thy nature may discern
“ Its real good, and what alone can save
“ Thy feeble spirit in this hour of ill 575
“ From folly and despair. O yet belov’d !
“ Let not this headlong terror quite o’erwhelm
“ Thy scatter’d pow’rs, nor fatal deem the rage
“ Of this tormentor, nor his proud assault,
“ While I am here to vindicate thy toil, 580
“ Above the gen’rous question of thy arm.
“ Brave by thy fears, and in thy weakness strong,
“ This hour he triumphs ; but confront his might,
“ And dare him to the combat, then, with ease
“ Disarm’d and quell’d, his fierceness he resigns 585
“ To bondage and to scorn ; while thus inur’d,
“ By watchful danger, by unceasing toil,
“ Th’ immortal mind superior to his fate,
“ Amid the outrage of external things,
“ Firm as the solid base of this great world, 590
“ Rests on his own foundations. Blow ye Winds !
“ Ye Waves ! ye Thunders ! roll your tempest on ;
“ Shake ye old Pillars of the marble sky !
“ Till all its orbs and all its worlds of fire
“ Be loosen’d from their seats ; yet still serene 595
“ Th’ unconquer’d mind looks down upon the wreck,
“ And, ever stronger as the storms advance,
“ Firm through the closing ruin holds his way,
“ Where Nature calls him, to the destin’d goal.”
“ So spake the goddess, while through all her fr me

- “ Celestial raptures flow’d, in ev’ry word, 601
“ In ev’ry motion kindling warmth divine
“ To sieze who listen’d. Vehement and swift,
“ As lightning fires the aromatic shade
“ In Ethiopian fields, the stripling felt 605
“ Her inspiration catch his fervid soul,
“ And starting from his languor thus exclaim’d :”
 “ Then let the trial come ! and witness thou
“ If terror be upon me, if I shrink
“ To meet the storm, or falter in my strength 610
“ When hardest it besets me. Do not think
“ That I am fearful and infirm of soul,
“ As late thy eyes beheld, for thou hast chang’d
“ My nature ; thy commanding voice has wak’d
“ My languid powers to bear me boldly on 615
“ Where’er the will divine my path ordains
“ Thro’ toil or peril ; only do not thou
“ Forsake me : O ! be thou forever near,
“ That I may listen to thy sacred voice,
“ And guide by thy decrees my constant feet. 620
“ But say, for ever are my eyes bereft ?
“ Say, shall the fair Euphrosyne not once
“ Appear again to charm me ? Thou in heav’n,
“ O thou Eternal Arbiter of things !
“ Be thy great bidding done ; for who am I 625
“ To question thy appointment ? Let the frowns
“ Of this avenger ev’ry morn o’ercast
“ The cheerful dawn, and every ev’ning damp,

- “ With double night, my dwelling ; I will learn
“ To hail them both, and unrepining bear 634
“ His hateful presence ; but permit my tongue
“ One glad request ; and, if my deeds may find
“ Thy awful eye propitious, O restore
“ The rosy featur’d maid, again to cheer
“ This lonely seat, and bless me with her smiles. 638
“ He spoke ; when instant, through the sable glooms,
“ With which that furious presence had involv’d
“ The ambient air, a flood of radiance came
“ Swift as the lightning flash ; the melting clouds
“ Flew diverse, and amid the blue serene 640
“ Euphrosyne appear’d. With sprightly step
“ The nymph alighted on the irriguous lawn,
“ And to her wond’ring audience thus began :”
 “ Lo ! I am here to answer to your vows,
“ And be the meeting fortunate ; I come 645
“ With joyful tidings : we shall part no more.
“ Hark ! how the gentle Echo, from her cell
“ Talks thro’ the cliffs, and murm’ring o’er the stream,
“ Repeats the accents, ‘We shall part no more !’
“ O my delightful friends, well pleas’d, on high, 650
“ The father has beheld you, while the might
“ Of that stern foe with bitter trial prov’d
“ Your equal doings ; then forever spake
“ The high decree ; that thou, celestial maid,
“ Howe’er that grisly phantom on thy steps 655
“ May sometimes dare intrude, yet never more

“ Shalt thou, descending to th’ abode of man,

“ Alone endure the rancour of his arm,

“ Or leave thy lov’d Euphrosyne behind.”

“ She ended, and the whole romantic scene 660

“ Immediate vanish’d ; rocks and woods, and rills,

“ The mantling tent, and each mysterious form,

“ Flew like the pictures of a morning dream

“ When sunshine fills the bed. Awhile I stood

“ Perplex’d and giddy, till the radiant pow’r 665

“ Who bade the visionary landscape rise,

“ As up to him I turn’d with gentlest looks,

“ Preventing my enquiry, thus began :”

“ There let thy soul acknowledge its complaint

“ How blind, how impious ! there behold the ways 670

“ Of Heav’n’s eternal destiny to man

“ For ever just, benevolent and wise ;

“ That Virtue’s awful steps, howe’er pursu’d

“ By vexing Fortune and intrusive Pain,

“ Should never be divided from her chaste, 675

“ Her fair attendant, Pleasure. Need I urge

“ Thy tardy thought thro’ all the various round

“ Of this existence, that thy soft’ning soul

“ At length may learn what energy the hand

“ Of Virtue mingles in the bitter tide 680

“ Of passion swelling with distress and pain,

“ To mitigate the sharp with gracious drops

“ Of cordial pleasure ? Ask the faithful youth

“ Why the cold urn of her whom long he lov’d

685

- “ So often fills his arms, so often draws
 “ His lonely footsteps at the silent hour
 “ To pay the mournful tribute of his tears :
 “ O ! he will tell thee that the wealth of worlds
 “ Should ne’er seduce his bosom to forego
 “ That sacred hour, when stealing from the noise 690
 “ Of care and envy, sweet remembrance sooths
 “ With Virtue’s kindest looks his aking breast,
 “ And turns his tears to rapture....Ask the crowd
 “ Which flies impatient from the village walk
 “ To climb the neighb’ring cliffs, when far below 695
 “ The cruel winds have hurl’d upon the coast
 “ Some helpless bark, while sacred Pity melts
 “ The gen’ral eye, or Terror’s icy hand
 “ Smites their distorted limbs and horrent hair,
 “ While ev’ry mother closer to her breast 700
 “ Catches her child, and pointing where the waves
 “ Foam thro’ the shatter’d vessel, shrieks aloud,
 “ As one poor wretch, that spreads his piteous arms
 “ For succour, swallow’d by the roaring surge,
 “ As now another, dash’d against the rock, 705
 “ Drops lifeless down ! O ! deemest thou indeed
 “ No kind endearment here by Nature giv’n
 “ To mutual terror and Compassion’s tears ?
 “ No sweetly melting softness which attracts,
 “ O’er all that edge of pain, the social pow’rs 710
 “ To this their proper action and their end ?
 “ Ask thy own heart, when at the midnight hour

- “ Slow thro’ that studious gloom thy pausing eye,
“ Led by the glimm’ring taper, moves around
“ The sacred volumes of the dead, the songs 715
“ Of Grecian bards, and records writ by Fame
“ For Grecian heroes, where the present pow’r
“ Of heav’n and earth surveys th’ immortal page,
“ E’en as a father blessing while he reads
“ The praises of his son, if then thy soul, 720
“ Spurning the yoke of these inglorious days,
“ Mix in their deeds and kindle with their flame ?
“ Say, when the prospect blackens on thy views,
“ When rooted from the base, heroic states
“ Mourn in the dust, and tremble at the frown 725
“ Of curst Ambition ; when the pious band
“ Of youths who fought for freedom, and their sires,
“ Lie side by side in gore ; when ruffian Pride
“ Usurps the throne of Justice, turns the pomp
“ Of public pow’r, the majesty of rule, 730
“ The sword, the laurel, and the purple robe,
“ To slavish empty pageants, to adorn
“ A tyrant’s walk, and glitter in the eyes
“ Of such as bow the knee, when honour’d urns
“ Of patriots and of chiefs, the awful bust 735
“ And story’d arch, to glut the coward rage
“ Of regal envy, strew the public way
“ With hallow’d ruins ; when the Muses’ haunt,
“ The marble Porch, where Wisdom, wont to talk
“ With Socrates or Tully, hears no more, 740

“ Save the hoarse jargon of contentious monks,
“ Or female Superstition’s midnight pray’r ;
“ When ruthless Rapine from the hand of Time
“ Tears the destroying scythe, with surer blow
“ To sweep the works of glory from their base, 745
“ Till Desolation o’er the grass-grown street
“ Expands his raven wings, and up the wall,
“ Where senates once the price of monarchs doom’d,
“ Hisses the gliding snake thro’ hoary weeds
“ That clasp the mould’ring column : thus defac’d, 750
“ Thus widely mournful when the prospect thrills
“ Thy beating bosom, when the patriot’s tear
“ Starts from thine eye, and thy extended arm
“ In fancy hurls the thunderbolt of Jove
“ To fire the impious wreath on Philip’s brow, 755
“ Or dash Octavius from the trophy’d car,
“ Say, does thy secret soul repine to taste
“ The big distress ? or wouldst thou then exchange
“ Those heart-ennobling sorrows for the lot
“ Of him who sits amid the gaudy herd 760
“ Of mute Barbarians bending to his nod,
“ And bears aloft his gold-invested front,
“ And says within himself, “ I am a king ;
“ And wherefore should the clam’rous voice of Woe
“ Intrude upon mine ear ?”...The baleful dregs 765
“ Of these late ages, this inglorious draught
“ Of servitude and folly, have not yet,
“ Blest be th’ Eternal Ruler of the world !

“ Defil’d to such a depth of sordid shame

“ The native honours of the human soul, 770

“ Nor so efface the image of its Sire.”

L. 755. Philip.] The Macedonian.

BOOK III.

ARGUMENT.

PLEASURE in observing the tempers and manners of men, even where vicious or absurd....The origin of vice, from false representations of the fancy, producing false opinions concerning good and evil....Inquiry into ridicule....The final cause of the sense of ridicule....The resemblance of certain aspects of inanimate things to the sensations and properties of the mind....The operations of the mind in the production of the works of imagination described....The secondary Pleasure from imitation....The benevolent order of the world illustrated in the arbitrary connection of these Pleasures with the objects which excite them....The nature and conduct of taste....Concluding with an account of the natural advantages resulting from a sensible and well formed Imagination.

WHAT wonder therefore, since th' endearing ties
Of passion link the universal kind
Of man so close, what wonder if to search
This common nature thro' the various change
Of sex, and age, and fortune, and the frame
Of each peculiar, draw thy busy mind
With unresisted charms ? The spacious west,
And all the teeming regions of the south,

Hold not a quarry to the curious flight
Of knowledge half so tempting or so fair 10
As man to man ; nor only where the smiles
Of love invite, nor only where th' applause
Of cordial honour turns th' attentive eye
On Virtue's graceful deeds ; for since the course
Of things eternal acts in diff'rent ways 15
On human apprehensions, as the hand
Of Nature temper'd to a diff'rent frame
Peculiar minds, so haply where the pow'rs
Of fancy neither lessen nor enlarge
The images of things, but paint in all 20
Their genuine hues the features which they wore
In Nature, there opinion will be true
And action right ; for Action treads the path
In which Opinion says, he follows good,
Or flies from evil ; and Opinion gives 25
Report of good or evil as the scene
Was drawn by Fancy, lovely or deform'd :
Thus her report can never there be true
Where Fancy cheats the intellectual eye
With glaring colours and distorted lines. 30
Is there a man who, at the sound of death
Sees ghastly shapes of terror conjur'd up
And black before him, nought but death-bed groans
And fearful pray'rs, plunging from the brink
Of light and being down the gloomy air 35
An unknown depth ? Alas ! in such a mind,

If no bright forms of excellence attend
The image of his country, nor the pomp
Of sacred senates, nor the guardian voice
Of Justice on her throne, nor aught that wakes 40
The conscious bosom with a patriot's flame,
Will not Opinion tell him, that to die,
Or stand the hazard, is a greater ill
Than to betray his country ? and in act
Will he not choose to be a wretch and live ? 45
Here vice begins then. From th' enchanting cup
Which Fancy holds to all th' unwary, thirst
Of youth oft swallows a Circean draught,
That sheds a baleful tincture o'er the eye
Of Reason, till no longer he discerns, 50
And only guides to err ; then revel forth
A furious band, that spurn him from the throne,
And all is uproar. Thus Ambition grasps
The empire of the soul : thus pale Revenge
Unsheaths her murd'rous dagger ; and the hands 55
Of Lust and Rapine with unholy arts
Watch to o'erturn the barrier of the laws
That keeps them from their prey ; thus all the plagues
The wicked bear, or o'er the trembling scene
The Tragic Muse discloses, under shapes 60
Of honour, safety, pleasure, ease or pomp,
Stole first into the mind. Yet not by all
Those lying forms which Fancy in the brain
Engenders are the kindling passions driv'n

To guilty deeds, nor Reason bound in chains, 65
 That Vice alone may lord it : oft adorn'd
 With solemn pageants, Folly mounts the throne,
 And plays her idiot antics like a queen.
 A thousand garbs she wears, a thousand ways
 She wheels her giddy empire....Lo ! thus far 70
 With bold adventure to the Mantuan lyre
 I sing of Nature's charms, and touch well pleas'd
 A stricter note : now haply must my song
 Unbend her serious measure, and reveal
 In lighter strains how Folly's aukward arts 75
 Excite impetuous Laughter's gay rebuke,
 The sportive province of the comic Muse.

See in what crowds the uncouth forms advance !
 Each would outstrip the other, each prevent
 Our careful search, and offer to your gaze 80
 Unask'd his motley features. Wait a while,
 My curious Friends ! and let us first arrange
 In proper order your promisc'ous throng.

Behold the foremost band ; of slender thought,
 And easy faith ! whom flatt'ring Fancy soothes 85
 With lying spectres, in themselves to view
 Illustrious forms of excellence and good,
 That scorn the mansion. With exulting hearts
 They spread their spurious treasure to the sun ;
 And bid the world admire ! but chief the glance 90
 Of wishful Envy draws their joy-bright eyes,
 And lifts with self applause each lordly brow.

In numbers boundless as the blooms of spring,
Behold their glaring idols, empty shapes
By Fancy gilded o'er, and then set up 95
For adoration. Some in Learning's garb,
With formal band, and sable cinctur'd gown,
And rags of mouldy volumes. Some elate
With martial splendour, steely pikes and swords
Of costly frame, and gay Phœnician robes 100
Inwrought with flow'ry gold, assume the port
Of stately Valour ; list'ning by his side
There stands a female form ; to her, with looks
Of earnest import, pregnant with delight,
He talks of deadly deeds, of breaches, storms, 105
And sulph'rous mines, and ambush ; then at once
Breaks off, and smiles to see her look so pale,
And asks some wond'ring question of her fears !
Others of graver mien behold adorn'd
With holy ensigns, how sublime they move ; 110
And bending oft their sanctimonious eyes,
Take homage of the simple-minded throng ;
Ambassadors of heaven ! Nor much unlike
Is he whose visage in the lazy mist
That mantles ev'ry feature, hides a brood 115
Of politic conceits ; of whispers, nods,
And hint deep omen'd with unwieldy schemes,
And dark portents of state ! Ten thousand more,
Prodigious habits and tumult'ous tongues,
Pour dauntless in and swell the boastful band. 120

Then comes the second order, all who seek
The debt of praise, where watchful Unbelief
Darts thro' the thin pretence her squinting eye
On some retir'd appearance which belies
The boasted virtue, or annuls th'applause 125
That Justice else would pay. Here side by side
I see two leaders of the solemn train
Approaching ; one a female old and grey,
With eyes demure and wrinkle-furrow'd brow,
Pale as the cheeks of Death ; yet still she stuns 130
The sick'ning audience with a nauseous tale ;
How many youths her myrtle-chains have worn,
How many virgins at her triumphs pin'd !
Yet how resolv'd she guards her cautious heart !
Such is her terror at the risks of love 135
And man's seducing tongue ! the other seems
A bearded sage, ungentle in his mien,
And sordid all his habit ; peevish Want
Grins at his heels, while down the gazing throng
He stalks, resounding in magnific praise 140
The vanity of riches, the contempt
Of pomp and pow'r. Be prudent in your zeal,
Ye grave associates ! let the silent grace
Of her who blushes at the fond regard
Her charms inspire, more eloquent unfold 145
The praise of spotless honour : let the man
Whose eye regards not his illustrious pomp
And ample store but as indulgent streams

To cheer the barren soil, and spread the fruits
Of joy, let him by juster measures fix 150
The price of riches and the end of pow'r.

Another tribe succeeds ; deluded long
By Fancy's dazzling optics, these behold
The images of some peculiar things
With brighter hues resplendent, and pourtray'd 155
With features nobler far than e'er adorn'd
Their genuine objects : hence the fever'd heart
Pants with delirious hope for tinsel charms ;
Hence oft obtrusive on the eye of Scorn
Untimely Zeal her witless pride betrays, 160
And serious Manhood from the tow'ring aim
Of Wisdom stoops to emulate the boast
Of childish Toil. Behold yon' mystic form,
Bedeck'd with feathers, insects, weeds, and shells !
Not with intenser view the Samian sage 165
Bent his fixt eye on heav'n's intenser fires,
When first the order of the radiant scene
Swell'd his exulting thought, than his surveys
A muckworm's entrails or a spider's fang.
Next him a youth, with flow'rs and myrtles crown'd, 170
Attends that virgin form, and blushing knees,
With fondest gesture and a suppliant's tongue,
To win her coy regard. Adieu for him
The dull engagements of the bustling world !
Adieu the sick impertinence of praise, 175
And hope and action ! for with her alone

By streams and shades to steal these sighing hours
Is all he asks, and all that Fate can give !
Thee too, facetious Momion ! wand'ring here,
Thee, dreaded Censor ! oft have I beheld 180
Bewilder'd unawares : alas ! too long
Flush'd with thy comic triumphs and the spoils
Of sly Derision ! till on ev'ry side
Hurling thy random bolts, offended Truth
Assign'd thee here thy station with the slaves 135
Of Folly. Thy once formidable name
Shall grace her humble records, and be heard
In scoffs and mock'ry bandy'd from the lips
Of all the vengeful brotherhood around,
So oft the patient victims of thy scorn. 190

But now, ye Gay ! to whom indulgent Fate
Of all the Muses' empire hath assign'd
The fields of folly, hither each advance
Your sickles : here the teeming soil affords
Its richest growth. A fav'rite brood appears, 195
Inwhom the demon with a mother's joy
Views all her charms reflected, all her cares
At full repaid. Ye most illustr'ous Band !
Who, scorning Reason's tame pedantic rules,
And Order's vulgar bondage, never meant 200
For souls sublime as yours, with gen'rous zeal
Pay Vice the rev'rence Virtue long usurp'd,
And yield Deformity the fond applause
Which Beauty wont to claim, forgive my song,

That for the blushing diffidence of youth 205
It shuns th' unequal province of your praise.

Thus far triumphant in the pleasing guile
Of bland Imagination, Folly's train
Have dar'd our search ; but now a dastard kind
Advance reluctant, and with falt'ring feet 210
Shrink from the gazer's eye : enfeebled hearts !
Whom Fancy chills with visionary fears,
Or bends to servile tameness with conceits
Of shame, or evil, or of base defect,
Fantastic and delusive. Here the slave, 215
Who droops abash'd when fallen Pomp surveys
His humbler habit ; here the trembling wretch,
Unnerv'd and struck with Terror's icy bolts,
Spent in weak wailings, drown'd in shameful tears
At ev'ry dream of danger ; here subdu'd 220
By frontless Laughter, and the hardy scorn
Of old unfeeling Vice, the abject soul,
Who blushing, half resigns the candid praise
Of temperance and honour, half disowns
A freeman's hatred of tyrannic pride, 225
And hears with sickly smiles the venal mouth
With foulest licence mock the patriot's name.

Last of the motley bands, on whom the pow'r
Of gay Derision bends her hostile aim,
Is that where shameful Ignorance presides. 230
Beneath her sordid banners, lo ! they march
Like blind and lame. Whate'er their doubtful hands

Attempt, Confusion straight appears behind,
And troubles all the work. Thro' many a maze
Perplex'd they struggle, changing ev'ry path, 235
O'erturning ev'ry purpose, then at last
Sit down dismay'd, and leave th' entangled scene
For Scorn to sport with. Such then is th' abode
Of Folly in the mind, and such the shapes
In which she governs her obsequious train. 240

Thro' ev'ry scene of ridicule in things
To lead the tenour of my devious lay,
Thro' ev'ry swift occasion which the hand
Of Laughter points at when the mirthful sting
Distends her sallying nerves and chokes her tongue ;
What were it but to count each crystal drop 246
Which Morning's dewy fingers on the blooms
Of May distil ? Suffice it to have said,
Where'er the pow'r of Ridicule displays
Her quaint-ey'd visage, some incongr'ous form, 250
Some stubborn dissonance of things combin'd,
Strikes on the quick observer ; whether Pomp,
Or Praise, or Beauty, mix their partial claim
Where sordid fashions, where ignoble deeds,
Where foul Deformity, are wont to dwell, 255
Or whether these with violation loath'd
Invade resplendent Pomp's imperious mien,
The charms of Beauty or the boast of Praise.

Ask we for what fair end th' Almighty Sire
In mortal bosoms wakes this gay contempt, 260

These grateful stings of laughter, from disgust
Educ'ing pleasure? Wherefore but to aid
The tardy steps of Reason, and at once
By this prompt impulse urge us to depress
The giddy aims of Folly? Tho' the light 265
Of truth, slow dawning on the inquiring mind,
At length unfolds thro' many a subtle tie
How these uncouth disorders end at last
In public evil, yet benignant Heav'n,
Conscious how dim the dawn of truth appears 270
To thousands, conscious what a scanty pause
From labours and from care, the wider lot
Of humble life affords for studious thought
To scan the maze of Nature, therefore stamp'd
The glaring scenes with characters of scorn, 275
As broad, as obvious, to the passing clown
As to the letter'd sage's curious eye.

Such are the various aspects of the mind....
Some heav'nly genius, whose unclouded thoughts
Attain that secret harmony which blends 280
Th' ethereal spirit with its mould of clay,
O! teach me to reveal the grateful charm
That searchless Nature o'er the sense of man
Diffuses to behold in lifeless things
The inexpressive semblance of himself, 285
Of thought and passion. Mark the sable woods
That shade sublime yon' mountain's nodding brow;
With what religious awe the solemn scene

Commands your steps ! as if the rev'rend form
Of Minos or of Numa should forsake 290

Th' Elysian seats, and down th' embow'ring glade
Move to your pausing eye ! behold th' expanse
Of yon gay landscape, where the silver clouds
Flit o'er the heav'ns before the sprightly breeze ;
Now the grey cincture skirts the doubtful sun, 295

Now streams of splendour thro' their op'ning veil
Effulgent sweep from off the gilded lawn,
Th' aërial shadows on the curling brook,
And on the shady margin's quiv'ring leaves,
With quickest lustre glancing : while you view 300

The prospect, say, within your cheerful breast
Plays not the lively sense of winning Mirth
With clouds and sunshine checker'd, while the round
Of social converse to th' inspiring tongue
Of some gay nymph amid her subject train 305

Moves all obsequious ? Whence is this effect,
This kindred pow'r of such discordant things ?
Or flows that semblance from the mystic tone
To which the new born mind's harmonious pow'rs
At first were strung ? or rather from the links 310
Which artful Custom twines around her frame ?

For when the diff'rent images of things
By Chance combin'd, have struck th' attentive soul
With deeper impulse, or, connected long,
Have drawn her frequent eye ; howe'er distinct 315
Th' external scenes, yet oft th' ideas gain

From that conjunction an eternal tie
 And sympathy unbroken. Let the mind
 Recall one partner of the various league,
 Immediate, lo ! the firm confed'rates rise, 320
 And each his former station straight resumes ;
 One movement governs the consenting throng,
 And all at once with rosy pleasure shine,
 Or all are sadden'd with the glooms of care.
 'Twas thus, if ancient Fame the truth unfold, 325
 Two faithful needles from th' informing touch
 Of the same parent-stone together drew
 Its mystic virtue, and at first conspir'd
 With fatal impulse quiv'ring to the pole ;
 Then tho' disjoin'd by kingdoms, tho' the main 330
 Roll'd its broad surge betwixt, and diff'rent stars
 Beheld their wakeful motions, yet preserv'd
 The former friendship, and remember'd still
 Th' alliance of their birth : whate'er the line
 Which one posses'd, nor pause nor quiet knew 335
 The sure associate, ere with trembling speed
 He found its path, and fix'd unerring there.
 Such is the secret union when we feel
 A song, a flow'r, a name, at once restore
 Those long connected scenes where first they mov'd
 Th' attention backward thro' her mazy walks 341
 Guiding the wanton fancy to her scope,
 To temples, courts, or fields ; with all the band
 Of painted forms, of passions and designs

Attendant, whence, if pleasing in itself, 345
The prospect from that sweet accession gains
Redoubled influence o'er the list'ning mind.

By these mysterious ties the busy power
Of Mem'ry her ideal train preserves
Entire ; or when they would elude her watch, 350
Reclaims their fleeting footsteps from the waste
Of dark oblivion ; thus collecting all
The various forms of being to present
Before the curious aim of mimic art,
Their largest choice ; like spring's unfolded blooms 355
Exhaling sweetness, that the skilful bee
May taste at will, from their selected spoils
To work her dulcet food : For not th' expanse
Of living lakes in Summer's noontide calm
Reflects the bord'ring shade and sunbright heav'ns 360
With fairer semblance, not the sculptur'd gold
More faithful keeps the graver's lively trace,
Than he whose birth the sister pow'rs of Art
Propitious view'd, and from his genial star
Shed influence to the seeds of fancy kind, 365
Than his attemper'd bosom must preserve
The seal of Nature : there alone unchang'd
Her form remains ; the balmy walks of May
There breathe perennial sweets, the trembling chord
Resounds for ever in th' abstracted ear 370
Melodious ; and the virgin's radiant eye,
Superior to disease, to grief and time,

Shines with unbating lustre. Thus at length,
Endow'd with all that Nature can bestow,
The child of Fancy oft in silence bends 375
O'er these mix'd treasures of his pregnant breast
With conscious pride ; from them he oft resolves
To frame he knows not what excelling things,
And win he knows not what sublime reward
Of praise and wonder. By degrees the Mind 380
Feels her young nerves dilate, the plastic pow'rs
Labour for action, blind emotions heave
His bosom, and with loveliest frenzy caught,
From earth to heav'n he rolls his daring eye,
From heav'n to earth. Anon ten thousand shapes, 385
Like spectres trooping to the wizard's call,
Flit swift before him ; from the womb of earth,
From ocean's bed, they come : th' eternal heav'ns
Disclose their splendours, and the dark abyss
Pours out her births unknown. With fixed gaze 390
He marks the rising phantoms, now compares
The diff'rent forms, now blends them, now divides,
Enlarges and extenuates by turns ;
Opposes, ranges in fantastic bands,
And infinitely varies : hither now, 395
Now thither, fluctuates his inconstant aim,
With endless choice perplex'd. At length his plan
Begins to open, lucid order dawns ;
And as from Chaos old the jarring seeds
Of Nature at the voice divine repair'd 400

Each to its place, till rosy earth unveil'd
Her fragrant bosom, and the joyful sun
Sprung up the blue serene by swift degrees,
Thus disentangled his entire design
Emerges. Colours mingle, features join, 405
And lines converge ; the fainter parts retire,
The fairer eminent in light advance,
And ev'ry image on its neighbour smiles.
A while he stands, and with a father's joy
Contemplates ; then with Promethean art 410
Into its proper vehicle he breathes
The fair conception, which imbody'd thus
And permanent, becomes to eyes or ears,
An object ascertain'd ; while thus inform'd,
The various organs of his mimic skill, 415
The consonance of sounds, the featur'd rock,
The shadowy picture and impassion'd verse,
Beyond their proper pow'rs attract the soul
By that expressive semblance, while in sight
Of Nature's great original we scan 420
The lively child of Art ; while line by line,
And feature after feature, we refer
To that sublime exemplar whence it stole
Those animating charms. Thus beauty's plan
Betwixt them wav'ring hangs, approaching love 425
Doubts where to chuse, and mortal man aspires
To tempt creative praise. As when a cloud
Of gath'ring hail, with limpid crusts of ice

Enclos'd, and obvious to the beaming sun,
Collects his large effulgence, straight the heav'ns 430
With equal flames present on either hand
The radiant visage, Persia stands at gaze
Appall'd, and on the brink of Ganges doubts
The snowy-vested seer, in Mithra's name,
To which the fragrance of the south shall burn, 435
To which his warbled orisons ascend.

Such various bliss the well-tun'd heart enjoys,
Favour'd of heav'n ! while, plung'd in sordid cares,
Th' unfeeling vulgar mocks the boon divine ;
And harsh Austerity, from whose rebuke 440
Young Love and smiling Wonder shrink away,
Abash'd and chill of heart, with sager frowns
Condemns the fair enchantment. On my strain
Perhaps e'en now some cold fastidious judge
Casts a disdainful eye, and calls my toil, 445
And calls the love and beauty which I sing,
The dream of Folly. Thou, grave Censor ! say,
Is beauty then a dream, because the glooms
Of dulness hang too heavy on thy sense
To let her shine on thee ? So the man 450
Whose eye ne'er open'd on the light of heav'n,
Might smile with scorn while raptur'd Vision tells
Of the gay colour'd radiance flushing bright
O'er all creation. From the wise be far
Such gross unhallow'd pride ! Nor needs my song 455
Descend so low, but rather now unfold,

If human thought could reach, or words unfold,
By what mysterious fabric of the mind
The deep-felt joys and harmony of sound
Result from airy motion, and from shape 460
The lovely phantoms of sublime and fair.

By what fine ties hath God connected things,
When present in the mind, which in themselves
Have no connection? Sure the rising sun
O'er the cœrulean convex of the sea 465

With equal brightness and with equal warmth
Might roll his fiery orb, nor yet the soul
Thus feel her frame expanded, and her pow'rs
Exulting in the splendour she beholds,
Like a young conqu'ror moving thro' the pomp 470

Of some triumphal day. When join'd at eve,
Soft murm'ring streams and gales of gentlest breath
Melodious Philomela's wakeful strain
Attemper, could not man's discerning ear
'Thro' all its tones the symphony pursue, 475

Nor yet this breath divine of nameless joy
Steal thro' his veins, and fan th' awaken'd heart,
Mild as the breeze, yet rapt'rous as the song?

But were not Nature still endow'd at large
With all which life requires, tho' unadorn'd 480
With such enchantment; wherefore then her form
So exquisitely fair? her breath perfum'd
With such ethereal sweetness? whence her voice
Inform'd at will to raise or to depress

Th' impassion'd soul ? and whence the robes of light
Which thus invest her with more lovely pomp 486
Than Fancy can describe ? Whence but from thee,
O Source Divine of everflowing love !
And thy unmeasur'd goodness ! Not content
With ev'ry food of life to nourish man, 490
By kind illusions of the wond'ring sense
Thou mak'st all Nature beauty to his eye,
Or music to his ear : well pleas'd he scans
The goodly prospect, and with inward smiles
Treads the gay verdure of the painted plain, 495
Beholds the azure canopy of heav'n,
And living lamps that over-arch his head
With more than regal splendour ; bends his ears
To the full choir of water, air, and earth ;
Nor heeds the pleasing error of his thought, 500
Nor doubts the painted green or azure arch,
Nor questions more the music's mingling sounds,
Than space or motion, or eternal time ;
So sweet he feels their influence to attract
The fix'd soul, to brighten the dull glooms 505
Of care, and make the destin'd road of life
Delightful to his feet. So fables tell,
Th' advent'rous hero, bound on hard exploits,
Beholds with glad surprise, by secret spells
Of some kind sage, the patron of his toils, 510
A visionary paradise disclos'd
Amid the dubious wild ; with streams and shades,

And airy songs, th' enchanted landscape smiles,
Cheers his long labours and renews his frame.
What then is taste but these internal pow'r's, 515
Active and strong, and feelingly alive
To each fine impulse ? a discerning sense
Of decent and sublime, with quick disgust
From things deform'd, or disarrang'd, or gross
In species ? This nor gems, nor stores of gold, 520
Nor purple state, nor culture, can bestow,
But God alone, when first his active hand
Imprints the secret biass of the soul.
He, mighty Parent ! wise and just in all,
Free as the vital breeze or light of heav'n 525
Reveals the charms of Nature. Ask the swain
Who journies homeward from a summer day's
Long labour, why, forgetful of his toils
And due repose, he loiters to behold
The sunshine gleaming as thro' amber clouds 530
O'er all the western sky ? full soon, I ween,
His rude expression and untutor'd airs
Beyond the pow'r's of language will unfold
The form of Beauty smiling at his heart,
How lovely, how commanding ! But tho' Heav'n 535
In ev'ry breast hath sown these early seeds
Of love and admiration, yet in vain
Without fair culture's kind parental aid,
Without enliv'ning suns and genial show'rs,
And shelter from the blast, in vain we hope 540

The tender plant should rear its blooming head,
Or yield the harvest promis'd in its spring.
Nor yet will ev'ry soil with equal stores
Repay the tiller's labour, or attend
His will obsequious, whether to produce 545
The olive or the laurel. Diff'rent minds
Incline to diff'rent objects : one pursues
The vast alone, the wonderful, the wild ;
Another sighs for harmony and grace,
And gentlest beauty. Hence when lightning fires 550
The arch of heav'n, and thunders rock the ground,
When furious whirlwinds rend the howling air,
And ocean, groaning from his lowest bed,
Heaves his tempest'ous billows to the sky ;
Amid the mighty uproar, while below 555
The nations tremble, Shakespeare looks abroad
From some high cliff superior, and enjoys
The elemental war : but Waller longs
All on the margin of some flow'ry stream
To spread his careless limbs amid the cool 560
Of plantane shades, and to the list'ning deer
The tale of slighted vows and love's disdain
Resound soft-warbling all the live long day :
Consenting Zephyr sighs, the weeping rill
Joins in his plaint melodious, mute the groves, 565
And hill and dale with all their echoes mourn.
Such and so various are the tastes of men !

Oh blest of Heav'n ! whom not the languid songs

Of luxury, the Siren, not the bribes
Of sordid Wealth, nor all the gaudy spoils 570
Of pageant Honour, can seduce to leave
Those ever-blooming sweets which from the store
Of Nature fair Imagination culls
To charm th' enliven'd soul ! What tho' not all
Of mortal offspring can attain the heights 575
Of envy'd life, tho' only few possess
Patrician treasures or imperial state ;
Yet Nature's care, to all her children just,
With richer treasures and an ampler state,
Endows at large whatever happy man 580
Will deign to use them. His the city's pomp,
The rural honours his : whate'er adorns
The princely dome, the column and the arch,
The breathing marbles and the sculptur'd gold,
Beyond the proud possessor's narrow claim, 585
His tuneful breast enjoys. For him the Spring
Distils her dews, and from the silken gem
Its lucid leaves unfolds ; for him the hand
Of Autumn tinges ev'ry fertile branch
With blooming gold and blushes like the Morn. 590
Each passing Hour sheds tribute from her wings,
And still new beauties meet his lonely walk,
And loves unfelt attract him. Not a breeze
Flies o'er the meadow, not a cloud imbibes
The setting sun's effulgence, not a strain 595
From all the tenants of the warbling shade

Ascends but whence his bosom can partake

• Fresh pleasure unprov'd : nor thence partakes

• Fresh pleasure only, for th' attentive mind

• By this harmonious action on her pow'rs 600

• Becomes herself harmonious : wont so oft

• In outward things to meditate the charm

• Of sacred order, soon she seeks at home

• To find a kindred order, to exert

• Within herself this elegance of love, 605

• This fair inspir'd delight : her temper'd pow'rs

• Refine at length, and ev'ry passion wears

• A chaster, milder, more attractive mien.

• But if to ampler prospects, if to gaze

• On Nature's form, where negligent of all 610

• These lesser graces, she assumes the port

• Of that Eternal Majesty that weigh'd

• The world's foundations, if to these the mind

• Exalts her daring eye, then mightier far

• Will be the change and nobler. Would the forms

• Of servile custom cramp her gen'rous pow'rs ? 616

• Would sordid policies, the barb'rous growth

• Of Ignorance and Rapine, bow her down

• To tame pursuits, to indolence and fear ?

• Lo ! he appeals to Nature, to the winds 620

• And rolling waves, the sun's unwearied course,

• The elements and seasons. All declare

• For what th' Eternal Maker has ordain'd

• The pow'rs of man : we feel within ourselves

His energy divine : he tells the heart 625

He meant, he made us to behold and love

What he beholds and loves, the gen'ral orb

Of life and being ; to be great like him,

Beneficent and active. Thus the men

Whom Nature's works can charm, with God himself 630

Hold converse, grow familiar day by day

With his conceptions, act upon his plan,

And form to his the relish of their souls.









